

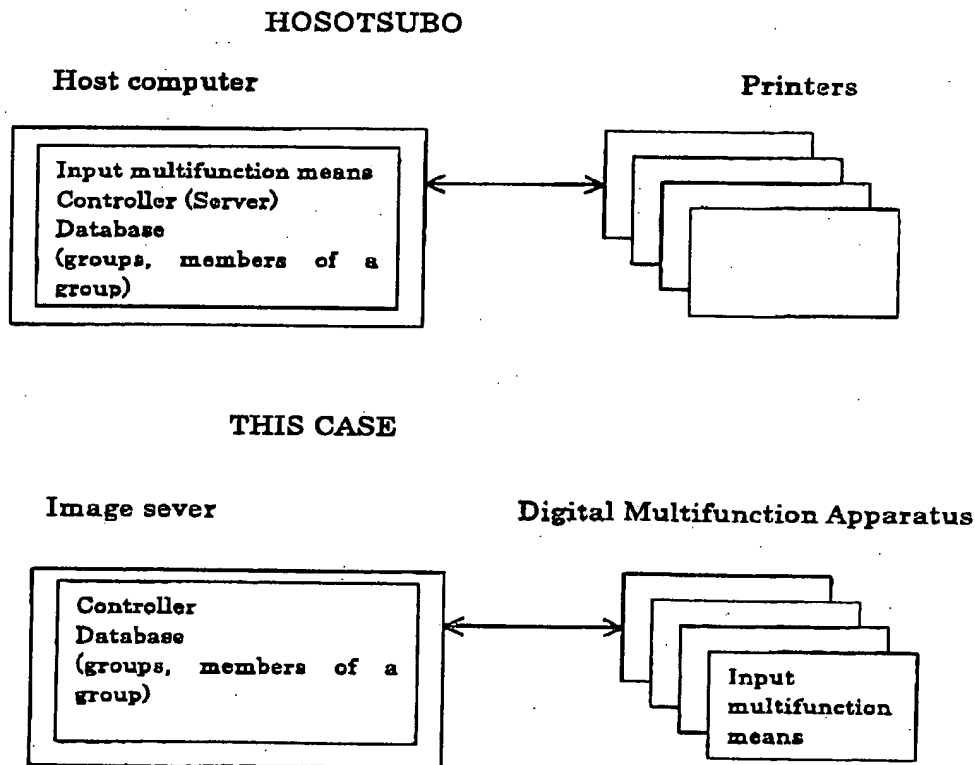
**REMARKS**

In response to the Office Action dated February 26, 2003, claims 1 and 12 are amended, and claim 6 is canceled. Claims 1, 3-5 and 12 are now active in this application. No new matter has been added.

**REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103**

Claims 1, 3-6 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Hosotsubo (USPN 6,009,485) in view of Tabata (USPN 6,198,542).

The configuration disclosed by Hosotsubo and the present invention (This Case), are illustrated as follows:



As shown in the above figures, a digital multifunction apparatus, as recited in independent claims 1 and 12, is provided with input manipulation means. In contrast, the host computer of Hosotsubo is provided with input manipulation means, as noted by the Examiner in the Official Action at page 2, first sentence of the last paragraph, not the printers (the printers correspond to the digital multifunction apparatus).

For the inventions recited in claims 1 and 12, the input manipulation means *of the digital multifunction apparatus* are used to register the digital multifunction apparatus to a specific group. In Hosotsubo, a printer cannot be registered to a desired group using an input manipulation means of the printer, as no such input manipulation means is present in the printer(s). The Examiner cannot disregard the specific language of claims 1 and 12, and on this point, the inventions recited in claims 1 and 12 are clearly distinguishable over the arrangement of Hosotsubo.

In addition, since a digital multifunction apparatus cannot access to the database of the image server directly and also cannot reference or change the content of the database of the image server, the digital multifunction apparatus and the image server are designed to execute the following transactions through a network:

- (1) the digital manipulation apparatus requests the image server to send back all the destination groups (see claims 1 and 12);
- (2) the image server sends the destination groups to the digital multifunction apparatus responding to the request (see claims 1 and 12); and
- (3) the digital multifunction apparatus sends to the image server a specified group with a group registration request (see claims 1 and 12).

As compared to the above configuration, in the arrangement of Hosotsubo, the host computer, which is provided with the input manipulation means, does not execute any transaction through the network.

Thus, as described above, the inventions recited in claims 1 and 12 further differ from Hosotsubo in that the arrangement of Hosotsubo cannot permit a user to register a printer (digital multifunction apparatus) to a desired group via the printer.

As noted in the previous response, Tabata discloses that a group can be listed on a display on the server side only. Tabata does **NOT** disclose or suggest that the group can be listed on the side of the digital multifunction apparatus. Thus, even if the teaching of Tabata were combined with the arrangement of Hosotsubo, the claimed invention does not result, as the resulting communication system would still not have:

***input manipulation means, provided in each digital multifunction apparatus, which can request the image server to send back all the destination groups, and specify a specific group from among all the destination groups sent back from the image server, and send to the image server at least the specified group together with a group registration request to register the digital multifunction apparatus with the specified group after specifying the group ... (Emphasis added)***

as recited in claim 1, or carry out:

***requesting from a digital multifunction apparatus for the image server to send back all the destination groups;***

***sending all the destination groups from said image server to said digital multifunction apparatus in response to the request from the digital multifunction apparatus for sending all the destination groups;***

***sending from an input manipulation means provided in the digital multifunction apparatus a request for registration of the digital multifunction apparatus with a destination group, and at least a specified destination group specified by the digital multifunction apparatus; and***

***registering said digital multifunction apparatus with the specified destination group according to the group registration request and the specified destination group sent from said digital multifunction apparatus. (Emphasis added)***

as recited in claim 12. Thus, independent claims 1 and 12 are patentable over Hosotsubo and Tabata, considered alone or in combination.

At any rate, independent claims 1 and 12 are amended to delineate that the digital multifunction apparatus *include a printing function to print image data from the image sever, the plurality of digital multifunction apparatus are connected to the image server via network, and the digital multifunction apparatus communicates with the image server via the network*, to more clearly define the subject matter of the present invention.

In view of the above, the allowance of independent claims 1 and 12, as amended, as well as dependent claims 3-6, is respectfully solicited.

### CONCLUSION

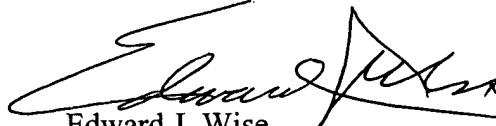
Accordingly, it is urged that the application, as now amended, is in condition for allowance. Entry of the amendment and favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended, are respectfully requested. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any

excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward J. Wise', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

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